

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 226531  
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
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INFO AMEMBASSY KUWAIT  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
AMEMBASSY SANA

S E C R E T STATE 226531

LONDON FOR KINSOLVING; OTHER ADDRESSEES FOR AMBASSADORS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: EG, IS, PINR

SUBJECT: INTSUM 405 - SEPTEMBER 20, 1977

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1. LEBANON. FIGHTING CONTINUED IN SOUTHERN LEBANON YES-  
TERDAY. AT LEAST 40 PERSONS WERE REPORTED KILLED AND  
100 WOUNDED. AS USUAL, MANY OF THE CASUALTIES WERE  
CIVILIANS, ACCORDING TO MEDICAL SOURCES IN ISRAEL AND  
LEBANON. HEAVY EXCHANGES OF FIRE SEEM TO HAVE BEEN CON-  
CENTRATED IN THE MOUNT HERMON AREA TO THE EAST OF KHIYAM,  
AROUND KHIYAM, AND FOR CONTROL OF THE LITANI RIVER BRIDGE  
WHICH SEPARATES RIGHTIST MARJAYOUN FROM LEFTIST NABATIYAH.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 226531

2. THE EXTENT OF DIRECT INVOLVEMENT IN THE FIGHTING  
BY ISRAELI GROUND -- AS CONTRASTED TO ARTILLERY --  
UNITS IS STILL AN OPEN QUESTION. THE ISRAELIS, ON  
SEPTEMBER 16 OR 17, APPARENTLY MOVED AT LEAST ONE MECHANI-  
ZED INFANTRY COMPANY INTO THE MARJAYOUN-QLAYA AREA IN  
SUPPORT OF THE RIGHTIST FORCES. OUR DEFENSE ATTACHE SAW

A BATTLE-READY MECHANIZED INFANTRY COMPANY AT METULLA DURING A ROAD RECONNAISSANCE ON SEPTEMBER 16. DIA'S ANALYSIS SUGGESTS THAT THE ISRAELIS MAY HAVE ALSO MOVED AN ARMORED COMPANY INTO SOUTHERN LEBANON, AS WELL AS SOME ARTILLERY BATTERIES, BUT WE HAVE NO HARD EVIDENCE AS YET. AS FAR AS CAN BE DETERMINED, THE ISRAELIS REMAINED IN THE MARJAYOUN AREA AS OF YESTERDAY.

3. SMALLER UNITS ALSO APPEAR ACTIVE ON THE SLOPES OF MOUNT HERMON. THREE VILLAGES HAVE BEEN OCCUPIED BY RIGHTIST/ISRAELI FORCES OVER THE LAST SEVERAL DAYS. IN THE PAST, SMALL ISRAELI UNITS HAVE PERIODICALLY PATROLLED THIS AREA, BUT THEIR CURRENT ACTIVITY SEEMS TO BE MORE EXTENSIVE AND OF LONGER DURATION.

4. WE BELIEVE, THAT, DESPITE ISRAELI DENIALS, THESE MILITARY ACTIVITIES REPRESENT A SIGNIFICANT ESCALATION OF ISRAELI INVOLVEMENT IN SOUTHERN LEBANON. FURTHERMORE, ISRAELI ACTIVITY AT PRESENT DIFFERS FROM PREVIOUS INCURSIONS:

--FORMERLY THE ISRAELIS SENT ONLY PLATOON-SIZE UNITS INTO LEBANON, BUT THEY ARE NOW USING COMPANIES;

--ISRAELI UNITS PREVIOUSLY CONDUCTED PROBES AND WITHDREW  
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 226531

IN A FEW HOURS, BUT THE CURRENT ACTIVITY ALREADY HAS LASTED LONGER THAN THIS USUAL PRACTICE. (SECRET)

5. EGYPT. MANY EGYPTIANS, INCLUDING FAHMI, ARE UNSURE ABOUT HOW THE US PLANS TO TRY TO BREAK THE CURRENT DIPLOMATIC LOGJAM. THEY ARE INCREASINGLY CONCERNED THAT THE US MIGHT NOT PRESS AHEAD WITH THE PEACE PROCESS IN THE FACE OF ISRAELI RELUCTANCE TO COMPROMISE.

6. WITH THIS IN MIND, FAHMI DURING HIS TALKS HERE PROBABLY WILL SHARPLY CRITICIZE ISRAEL'S SETTLEMENT POLICY IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES AS ERODING FURTHER THE CHANCES FOR PEACE. EGYPTIAN OFFICIALS HAVE APPRECIATED THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION'S CONDEMNATIONS OF THE ISRAELI MOVES BUT BELIEVE THE US SHOULD TAKE MORE CONCRETE STEPS TO BLOCK SUCH ACTIONS. FAHMI COULD ALSO VOICE EGYPT'S CONCERN, SHARED BY MANY ARABS, THAT ISRAEL MAY PREEMPT THE PEACE PROCESS BY A MILITARY INITIATIVE AT SOME POINT.

7. FAHMI MAY SEEK US SUPPORT FOR AN EGYPTIAN-SPONSORED UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION CONDEMNING ISRAEL'S SETTLEMENT POLICIES BY ARGUING THAT WITHOUT SUCH SUPPORT AN

EVEN STRONGER RESOLUTION MIGHT EMERGE.

8. IN COMMENTS TO THE PRESS BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE FROM CAIRO ON SUNDAY, FAHMI SAID HE WOULD URGE THE US TO RECOGNIZE THE PLO AND INDICATED HE WAS CARRYING A LETTER TO PRESIDENT CARTER FROM SADAT CALLING FOR PLO REPRESENTATION AT ANY FUTURE GENEVA PEACE CONFERENCE. FAHMI IS A STRONG PROPONENT OF A DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE US AND THE PLO, AND HE MAY URGE THE US TO INITIATE THESE TALKS WITHOUT PRECONDITIONS. (SECRET)

9. SYRIA. SYRIA DOES NOT INTEND TO PRESS FOR ISRAEL'S SUSPENSION FROM THE UN AS CALLED FOR BY FOREIGN MINISTER KHADDAM IN HIS ADDRESS TO THE EARLY SEPTEMBER ARAB SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 STATE 226531

LEAGUE COUNCIL MEETING, A SYRIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL COMMENTED TO EMBASSY DAMASCUS. THE OFFICIAL SAID THAT KHADDAM'S REMARKS WERE DUE TO TACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS PREVAILING AT THAT TIME. SYRIA, HOWEVER, UNDERSTANDS THE NEGATIVE IMPACT SUCH A MOVE WOULD ACTUALLY HAVE AND "DOES NOT WANT TO TURN BEGIN INTO A HERO." SYRIA HOPES, AND INDEED EXPECTS, THAT THE US WILL SUPPORT PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS ON ISRAELI SETTLEMENT ACTIVITIES AND ON THE PALESTINIANS, SINCE THEY WILL BE COINED IN LANGUAGE USED BY US OFFICIALS IN RECENT WEEKS, THE OFFICIAL ASSERTED. (CONFIDENTIAL)

10.ISRAEL. A FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL TOLD EMBASSY TEL AVIV THAT ISRAEL WILL INFORM THE UNESCO DIRECTOR GENERAL THAT IT AGREES TO THE VISIT OF AN INVESTIGATIVE MISSION TO THE OCCUPIED AREAS. THE VISIT COULD TAKE PLACE IN EITHER NOVEMBER OR DECEMBER. THE OFFICIAL SAID THAT THE DIRECTOR GENERAL'S FRAMEWORK FOR THE MISSION WAS NOT AS FAVORABLE AS HOPED, BUT, ON BALANCE, WAS ACCEPTABLE. THE DIRECTOR GENERAL DID NOT AGREE TO NAME MISSION MEMBERS FROM COUNTRIES WHICH HAVE RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL, NOR DID HE AGREE TO SUBMIT THE NAMES FOR ISRAEL'S PRIOR APPROVAL.

11. NEW FACILITIES HAVE RECENTLY BEEN CONSTRUCTED AT THE NAVAL FACILITY IN EILAT. THE NEW CONSTRUCTION CONSISTS

OF A LARGE SHED FOR MISSILE BOAT REPAIRS AND AN ELECTRONIC REPAIR SHOP. WITH THESE NEW FACILITIES, THE EILAT SHIPYARDS CAN PROBABLY MEET ALL RED SEA COMMAND REQUIREMENTS, EXCEPT MISSILE MAINTENANCE. (CONFIDENTIAL) VANCE

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